(as per WHO definition) and it was 0.95 per 10,000 population in December, 2005. As new cases keep on occurring, diagnosis and treatment services are being regularly provided through all Primary Health Centres and Government Hospitals and the Prevalence Rate is being regularly monitored by receiving monthly epidemiological situation report from all States/UTs through an inbuilt system of NLEP. The prevalence rate has further declined to 0.83 per 10,000 population in December, 2006.

Farm facilities to farmers at low rates

†*176. SHRI MAHENDRA SAHNI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 40 per cent farmers in the country are willing to abandon the profitless cultivation as per the fresh data of the National Sample Survey;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are considering upon any proposal to formulate new schemes to provide electricity, water, fertilizers and seeds at low rates to farmers;

(d) if so, whether the State Governments have been consulted in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) As per Report No. 496 on Situation Assessment Survey of Farmers titled "Some Aspects of Farming" of the National Sample Survery Organization (NSSO), 60 per cent of farmer households at all-India level reported that they liked farming as a profession. The remaining 40 per cent reported that, given a choice, they would take up some other career. Of the 40 per cent, those who did not like farming as a profession, 27 per cent did not find agriculture profitable. While 8 per cent thought agriculture as a risky venture, the remaining 5 per cent disliked it for some other reasons including low social status.

(c) to (e) In order to ensure that the farmers get fertilizers, seeds and irrigation facilities at low rates, subsidized inputs are made available through

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

specific schemes like 'National Horticulture Mission', 'Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil palm & Maize (ISOPOM)', 'Technology Mission on Cotton', 'Micro Irrigation', 'Development and Distribution of Infrastructure Facilities for Production and Distribution of Quality Seeds'. Besides, under other Centrally Sponsored Schemes subsumed under 'Macro Management of Agriculture Scheme', subsidies are also made available to the farmers.

In the Union Budget 2007-08, a mission for pulses has been announced for scaling up the production of breeder, foundation and certified seeds. It is targeted to double the production of certified seeds within a period of three years. further, restoration of water bodies and measures to arrest the depletion of ground water has been emphasized in the budget 2007-08 in addition to revamping of the 'Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme' which will create an additional potential of 9,00,000 hectares for irrigation.

Development of forest villages

*177. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BALAPTE:
SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the aims and objectives of developing forest villages;

(b) whether Government have received proposals for the development of forest villages;

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise, particularly from Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh;

(d) the funds allocated/utilized therefor, State-wise; and

(e) the number of villages developed, as on date?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Recognizing that conservation and development of forests is related to the welfare of the forest dependent communities, the Government of India is supporting projects for the development of forest villages aimed at improving the quality of life of people therein by providing basic minimum facilities and services like food, safe drinking water, health care, primary education, approach roads, other infrastructure facilities etc.